

AMERICAN HEALTH SOURCE



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | **2018**

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Executive Summary

An association management consortium contributing to the growth and development of American health care by serving the needs of a diverse family of health care providers and educators in the areas of alternative, complementary, conventional and allied health care.

Consortium Affiliates



American Manual Medicine Association



American Medical Massage Association



National Association for Therapeutic Exercise



American Institute of Naturopathic Medicine



National Governing Alliance
of Allied Health Professionals

National Governing Alliance of
Allied Health Professionals



National Governing Council
Health & Education Partnership



national board certification agency

National Board Certification Agency

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of American Health Source is to promote the advancement of scientifically based conventional, complementary and alternative health care education and training, testing and examination, and image and recognition within the allied health care community. The American Health Source family of organizations seeks to distinguish themselves as Associations dedicated to serving the professional needs of the individual by uniting the efforts of all members of the health care professions who practice complementary, alternative and allied health care.

American Health Source seeks through their efforts to uplift evidence based complementary and alternative medicine to the level of accepted medical specialties within the allied health care community. American Health Source professional associations welcome as members all individuals who practice the evidence-based health care professions.

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American Medical Massage Association

The American Medical Massage Association is a professional membership association for massage therapists who have obtained entry level training in massage therapy. The AMMA is approved by the Michigan Department of Career Development, Proprietary School Unit as a provider of residential, distance, and continuing education training programs. The AMMA is also approved by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork for continuing education programs.



American Manual Medicine Association

The American Manual Medicine Association was formed as a step above the American Medical Massage Association for manual therapists who have masters or doctoral level credentials. The American Manual Medicine Association is a professional membership association for clinical manual therapists who have completed a minimum of 2400 hours of clinical manual therapy or acupuncture training, or licensed physicians, naprapaths, physical therapists, nurses or chiropractors practicing manual therapy.



American Institute of Naturopathic Medicine

The American Institute of Naturopathic Medicine is a professional membership association for practitioners of natural health care who have graduated from a program recognized by the American Institute of Naturopathic Medicine with a diploma or certificate in naturopathy, holistic health, herbal medicine or clinical nutrition.

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National Governing Alliance of Allied Health Professionals

The National Governing Alliance of Allied Health Professionals is a professional membership association welcoming members from all allied health professions who have completed a licensed program recognized by the National Governing Alliance of Allied Health Professionals and who is a licensed, certified or registered clinical medical assistant, administrative medical assistant, cosmetic massage practitioner, paramedical skincare specialist, dermatology medical assistant, chiropractic assistant or other allied health professional.



National Association for Therapeutic Exercise

The National Association for Therapeutic Exercise is a professional membership association of therapeutic exercise practitioners who utilize preventative and rehabilitative modalities. The National Association for Therapeutic Exercise accepts as members exercise practitioners have completed a licensed program recognized by the association and are licensed, certified or registered personal trainers, fitness consultants, exercise specialists or therapeutic exercise instructors.



National Governing Council Health and Education Partnership

The National Governing Council Health and Education Partnership promotes and facilitates the dissemination of information and ideas through partnerships among academic institutions, associations and organizations, industries, foundations and governmental and community agencies.

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Moving Into the Future

American Health Source (AHS) has long been a contributor to the growth and development of American health care through its educational programs and publishing efforts. American Health Source has now moved to another level by joining with the American Medical Massage Association, the American Manual Medicine Association, the American Institute of Naturopathic Medicine, the National Association for Therapeutic Exercise, the National Governing Alliance of Allied Health Professionals, National Board Certification Agency, and the National Governing Council Health and Education Partnership in the formation of an association management consortium.

The word consortium originates with the Latin word for fellowship and the definition of a consortium is "an association or grouping of institutions, businesses, or organizations, usually set up for a common purpose that would be beyond the capabilities of a single member of the group."

The AHS Consortium of national trade associations has joined together to provide a grouping of educational, testing, credentialing, insurance and financial products, as well as many other benefits to its membership.

The national trade associations combined within the AHS consortium serve the needs of a diverse family of health care providers and educators in the areas of alternative, complementary, conventional, and allied health care and includes members from the professional disciplines of allied health education, medical assisting medical billing, nursing, medical massage, medical acupuncture, holistic health care, personal training, naturopathy and naprapathy.

Fulfilling a Mission of Professional Service

In an attempt to achieve a goal of advancing complementary, alternative and allied health care training, American Health Source has developed training manuals, CDs and DVDs on the science of medical assisting, medical massage and manual therapy, medical acupuncture, holistic health care, personal training, naturopathy and naprapathy. AHS publishes the latest information on complementary, alternative and allied healthcare that is gathered from research in biomechanics, physical and occupational therapy, chiropractic, manual therapy and other related fields of study. This information is then used:

- To improve or innovate new treatment techniques
- To produce education materials
- To write timely articles and papers

All income derived by the sales of these materials is used by AHS for its operations and program development.

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The Development of a New Approach in National Board Examination

In 1998 the AHS testing and examination affiliate, the National Board Certification Agency, developed their first national board examination, an entry level massage therapy exam. This examination measures professional accomplishments for massage therapists who have learned evidence based massage therapy. This National Board Certification Agency examination is modeled after similar examinations written for the allied medical professions.

The NBCA also developed a second exam, the diplomat examination for national board certification. This exam is a difficult six hour multi-level examination. This demanding examination is modeled after exams that are provided to manual therapy physicians and individuals practicing health care at the masters and doctoral level. Diplomate training and testing is a routine practice in medicine, chiropractic and allied health care professions. The NBCA was the first to bring this professional status to the manual therapist.

Since 1998, the National Board Certification Agency has developed examinations for national board certification in practical acupuncture, massage therapy, manual medicine, medical assisting, personal training, naturopathy, and lymphedema technician for the purpose of:

- Establishing measurable training and educational standards in complementary, alternative and allied health care.
- Establishing evidence based educational curriculum and practices as a vital professional ethic.
- Recognizing the competency and rewarding the accomplishments of professional practitioners.
- Differentiating between qualified, professional national board certified practitioners and therapists who lack appropriate training and certification.

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Exam Statistical Evaluation through Michigan State University

In 2005 the Center for Statistical Training and Consulting at Michigan State University completed the evaluation and assessment of the NBCA Medical Massage National Board Certification Examination. The completion of the statistical evaluation process adds credibility to the exam and makes it legally defensible. Since 2006, all NBCA exams undergo the process of statistical evaluation, assessment, and job task analysis.

These efforts are designed to provide the complementary, alternative and allied health care practitioner with the professional credentials needed to gain access to the growing opportunities and jobs that are becoming increasingly available to competently trained professionals.

Professional Development

American Health Source welcomes the opportunity to serve the portion of the general complementary, alternative and allied health care communities that have the capacity and ability to practice their vocation at a high level of professional competency in clinical environments. AHS recognizes that not all practitioners have the interest or the training to do so. AHS has, however, recognized the need to promote the development and to serve the needs of professionals practicing competent alternative, complementary or allied health care, those who are members of the professional medical community, or those who wish to practice these disciplines for purposes of physical rehabilitation.

American Health Source supports the rights of all practitioners to legally practice the complementary, alternative or allied health care method of their choice and inclination. It is, however, the mission of AHS to promote the growth, development and recognition of complementary, alternative and allied health care that is scientific and evidence based.

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Recognizing the Need for Higher Standards

American Health Source and their professional associations were formed for the following vital reasons:

- No other national associations existed to meet the specialized needs of those professionals practicing scientific and evidence based complementary, alternative and allied health care.
- Other national associations did not provide high membership standards or the clear professional image needed for professional credibility in these fields of health care.
- Other national associations either represent a very narrow clinical or esoteric aspect of complementary, alternative and allied health care.
- The AHS board and membership decided that a new and fresh approach was needed for the professional image of the complementary, alternative and allied health care provider due to the often confused and conflictive image of the traditional alternative or complementary health practitioner.

Several Organizations, One Common Goal

Consideration must be given to the historic heritage of many complementary, alternative and allied health professions and the many physicians, nurses, physical therapists and medical professionals who traditionally practiced evidenced based therapies.

American Health Source seeks to restore this heritage to the complementary, alternative and allied health care communities. Membership in an AHS association is a privilege afforded only to the most highly trained practitioners in the massage, manual therapy, medical assisting, nursing, acupuncture, holistic health care, personal training, naturopathy, naprapathy and medical communities. AHS does not seek to be the largest association consortium; we simply wish to represent the highest level of professional excellence. AHS has recognized the need to improve the training and abilities of practitioners through the development of training curriculum and educational materials. American Health Source has selected curriculum, educational materials and techniques based on the latest scientific research and evidence of effectiveness and clinical outcome data.

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American Health Source has found that standard complementary and alternative health care curriculums do not meet the needs of scientific and evidence based learning for several reasons:

- The techniques of most complementary and alternative health care, while demonstrating some clinical value, lack the specific results and outcomes needed for applications in physical therapy, rehabilitation and medical environments.
- Individuals trained in complementary and alternative health care often lack adequate training in health and medical sciences.
- Commonly used techniques in general complementary and alternative health care lack scientific evidence or effectiveness; or the existing scientific evidence shows a lack of effectiveness or even exacerbation of patient conditions.
- Several complementary and alternative health care practitioners and their associations commonly promote and provide unsubstantiated methods of treatment.
- Many complementary and alternative health care practitioners do not possess the competent scientific and academic training needed to treat patient conditions.
- Frequently, complementary and alternative health care practitioners are not trained or licensed in medical or allied medical fields.

American Health Source makes no distinction between its members and treats all members, regardless of profession, degree or affiliation, equally. AHS endorses the unity of all of the health care professions and their members.

American Health Source encourages complementary health care providers that use modalities of care that are regulated by state laws, such as acupuncture, to either work under the direct supervision of a medical physician or to use non needling acupuncture modalities. The diverse AHS membership incorporates health care professions that are regulated in many states and by many different state laws. While it is not the responsibility of AHS to enforce state law regarding the practice of health care, it is our intent and requirement that all members obey the health care practice laws that govern them.

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American Health Source has established individual membership criteria for each association based on hours of education, training curriculum, examination and testing, and continuing education requirements. However, some professional associations still allow individuals to join their organizations without having attended a massage school. AHS feels that this lack of valid membership criteria is inappropriate and contrary to the professional growth of complementary, alternative and allied health professions. In addition, AHS supports a multi layered approach to health care licensure and regulation that separates practitioners with lower level credentials and training from those with higher, scientific and clinically based training and credentials. AHS supports the legal practice of complementary, alternative and allied health care by all qualified practitioners.

Most complementary and alternative profession schools have a long road ahead before they will be able to provide programs comparable to those allied health care programs taught at colleges and universities. Central to this issue is the selection of approved techniques based upon scientific evidence that validates the clinical safety and effectiveness of each technique. Approved techniques must meet three important criteria:

- Scientific evidence of safety and effectiveness
- Techniques must produce measurable clinical outcomes
- Techniques must be appropriate for professional clinical environments

It is the goal of American Health Source to promote quality education and training related to massage, manual therapy, medical assisting, phlebotomy, paramedical skin care, nursing, acupuncture, holistic health care, personal training, naturopathy, naprapathy and other allied health care professions.

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A Call for Assistance

American Health Source has accomplished substantial goals. The AHS board of advisors, testing committee, and volunteers have helped in the formation and success of the organization. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following professionals:

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American Health Source is calling for research papers and studies regarding treatment techniques and protocols that it can add to its index of approved complementary, alternative and allied health care procedures. AHS would also like to add additional professional training seminars to its continuing education (CE) and curriculum development programs and we accept applications from qualified CE providers.

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American Health Source – We Are the Future

American Health Source recognizes that the organic growth of its professional associations and the changes they wish to promote, in massage, manual therapy, medical assisting, nursing, acupuncture, holistic health care, personal training, naturopathy, naprapathy and other allied health care professions, is a process and not an event. AHS and their association consortium will continue to promote and to encourage that positive process of change, always seeking to promote harmony and unity within these professions. American Health Source will, however, seek to become the defining element in determining the future definition and structure for scientific and evidence based complementary, alternative and allied health care professions.



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Model School Program



Blue Heron Academy
of Healing Arts & Sciences

The Blue Heron Academy of Healing Arts and Sciences is an American Health Source Model School and National Training Center. The Blue Heron Academy of Healing Arts and Sciences is a state licensed post-secondary school. The school is located in Grand Rapids, Michigan and adjacent to the campus of Calvin College.

The Academy is state approved and licensed to provide certificate, diploma and degree programs in medical assisting, medical billing, phlebotomy, home health care, paramedical skin care, massage therapy, and medical acupuncture.

The Blue Heron Academy has a strong scientific, research, and clinical foundation that is the core of all of the programs that the Academy offers. Students trained at the Academy are trained in the most valid clinical skills that have been shown to produce effective clinical results. Students attending the Academy are also trained to work with and in clinical, medical or chiropractic environments and students may participate in clinical or hospital based internships prior to graduation and certification. Students of the national recognized Blue Heron Academy medical massage or medical manual therapy programs may perform part of their clinical requirements at the Calvin College Wellness Center.

Additional accomplishments of the Blue Heron Academy AHS model school has been the completion and implementation of a new standardized curriculum that utilizes a programmed learning student binder. New student binders have been completed for the Academy's programs in holistic health care, clinical nutrition, and herbal medicine, medical and practical acupuncture, acupressure, and Chinese medicine, personal training, as well as, biomedicine.

The purpose of the new curriculum and student binders is to:

1. Provide a standardized core curriculum across the diverse educational and training programs that the Academy offers.
2. Provide BHA students with increased academic structure within their training programs.
3. Expand the self-study component of the Academy's training programs through the programmed learning student binder.
4. Standardize student testing and evaluation within the Academy's training programs.

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5. Increase student training across the various BHA career offerings.
6. Increase student credentialing and certification.
7. Bring greater awareness of the students to the trade association opportunities for professional membership, national board certification, malpractice and liability insurance, and ongoing professional advancement through continuing education.

Since its initial start as a free school for women who were victims of domestic abuse and assault the Academy has continued to provide low cost vocational education and certification to students.

American Health Source welcomes other schools to complete the application process to become approved schools.



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The Academy of Scandinavian Mobilization Therapy

The Academy of Scandinavian Mobilization Therapy provides advanced training and credentialing for manual therapists including medical, osteopathic, chiropractic, naturopathic, and naprapathic physicians, as well as, physical, occupational, and massage therapists. The highly specialized joint mobilization techniques and exercises of Scandinavian Mobilization Therapy are taught through our distance education programs and in a series of seminars across the U.S., and/or at our residential training center located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. SMT training leads to advanced certification in manual therapy and manual medicine, Scandinavian Mobilization Therapy, and Contemporary Naprapathic Medicine.

Members of the American Manual Medicine Association receive highly specialized training in Contemporary Naprapathic Medicine and Scandinavian Mobilization Therapy and they sit for the advanced manual medicine exam offered through the National Board Certification Agency (NBCA). This exam was statistically and psychometrically validated at the Michigan State University Center for Statistical Training and Consulting and receives ongoing evaluation and analysis through the NBCA's team of highly qualified exam construction consultants and committee.

In 2014 the Academy of Scandinavian Mobilization Therapy (ASMT) in conjunction with the American Naprapathic Association provided a series of weekend continuing education training seminars for naprapaths in Chicago, Illinois. During 2015, and continuing into 2016, the ASMT is offering advanced training seminars in manual medicine and the most advanced techniques and protocols in manual medicine and mobilization therapy that are available anywhere.

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